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IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 30 AUGUST 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ANGOLA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit the following message dated 23 August 1995 from His Excellency Mr. Venancio de Moura, Minister of External Relations of Angola, with the request that it be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Afonso VAN-DUNEM "Mbinda"
Permanent Representative

95-26776 (E) 010995 050995

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Annex

Message dated 23 August 1995 from the Minister of External Relations of Angola addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

1. As you know, the Government of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe was deposed on the morning of 15 August in a military coup d'état.

2. Following the coup, the group of Sao Tome and Principe Army officers who led it suspended the functioning of all the sovereign organs of Sao Tome and Principe and assumed direction of the country, though in a precarious form, through a Military Commission.

3. The Angolan Government was unable to remain indifferent to the situation, not only because it took place in a country that is a member of the subregional groups to which Angola also belongs, but above all as a matter of principle. On 16 August, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos denounced the use of force to resolve political questions. From Brazil, where he was conducting an official visit, the President offered Angola's good offices to mediate in the conflict and help to solve the political crisis that had developed.

4. Both parties in Sao Tome and Principe reacted favourably to the Angolan government offer. On 17 August, the Angolan Foreign Minister then left Brazil, where he had been accompanying the President of the Republic, and flew to Sao Tome. The purpose of the trip was to sound out the Military Commission, civil society and the deposed official authorities with a view to drawing together a consensus that would lead to the following:

(a) Re-establishment of democratic law and the juridico-constitutional order;

(b) Amnesty from the National Assembly for the leaders of the coup d'état of 15 August 1995.

5. Angolan mediators, in separate meetings held to achieve the above objectives, succeeded in getting the Military Commission to acknowledge that its function should be guided by the principle of renunciation of violence as a method of changing power and the recognition of elected authorities.

6. The mediators sought from the military a gesture of good will that resulted in the transfer of the President of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe from the military headquarters where he had been detained to an official residence of the Government. This action cleared the atmosphere and created a more propitious climate for discussions, since the general sentiment of the active elements of Sao Tome and Principe was favourable to the re-establishment of democratic law.

7. Having received replies to its requests, the mediation team developed, after several consultations, a draft agenda that it submitted for review by both parties (representatives of the State organs and the Military Commission). The

parties approved some principles, which were then included in a memorandum of understanding signed on 22 August 1995 by the parties and the mediation group.

8. The memorandum of understanding confirmed principles that safeguard, on the one hand, concerns that, according to the military, had forced them into the coup d'état and on the other hand, it dealt with concerns related to the political crisis, which related primarily to a lack of confidence in the military on the part of the deposed authorities.

9. In this connection, among the various aspects covered in the memorandum of understanding, one fact was underlined, namely, that it had been established that the restoration of sovereign organs involved the removal of all impediments to the normal functioning of State institutions, including the return of the assets of the respective organs.

10. To achieve this, under the memorandum, the Military Commission was dissolved and the return of its members to their previous positions was assured. A guarantee was included that the Sao Tome and Principe authorities would not take any criminal or judicial action against them, in the interest of normalizing the situation and of stability in Sao Tome and Principe.

11. Other complaints by the military, namely those referring to training, promotion and the improvement of social conditions, are also covered in the memorandum and will be addressed by the Government.

12. On the other hand, the memorandum of understanding confirmed the principle of respect for and defence of the democratic model contained in the Constitution, obliging each to recognize the popular will expressed through universal suffrage as the sole and exclusive way to maintain and obtain political power.

13. To this end, the necessity of scrupulously observing the term of office of organs democratically elected according to law was emphasized.

14. Under the agreements reached, a commission was created to monitor the implementation of the memorandum of understanding.

15. I considered it useful to bring to your attention this information so that you would have an idea of the manner in which the crisis in Sao Tome and Principe ended. The international community reacted with the firmness needed in cases in which legal and democratically elected powers are many times confronted with threats of dissolution or even dissolved through recourse to violence.

16. I take advantage of this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Angola, our gratitude for the support shown by the Security Council and the international community in general in the mediation task that, happily, we were able to carry out successfully.

17. This action by the international community, showing itself to be unequivocally in favour of democratic law in Sao Tome and Principe and of scrupulous respect for democratically elected sovereign organs, represented not only an invaluable contribution to the positive conclusion of the crisis in

Sao Tome and Principe, but also en example to be followed in all similar instances in any part of the world.

18. I ask that this memorandum be distributed as a document to all members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Venancio de MOURA